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SOCIAL, HUMANITARIAN AND HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS: SPECIAL ECONOMIC, HUMANITARIAN AND DISASTER RELIEF ASSISTANCE

Assistance to Yemen

Report of the Secretary-General

INTRODUCTION

1. In its resolution 1993/58 the Economic and Social Council, recognizing the challenges facing Yemen as a result of unification, the return of Yemeni expatriates, the flow of refugees, and recent natural disasters, called on the international community, Member States and all United Nations organizations, including the specialized agencies, to assist in addressing the emergency situation, to help Yemen in mobilizing its own resources, and to provide assistance to the Government in its reconstruction and development efforts. In addition, the Secretary-General was requested to submit a report on the implementation of the resolution to the Council at its substantive session of 1994.

MOBILIZATION OF INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE

A. Emergency recovery programme

2. Following the conflict between Iraq and Kuwait and in order to deal with the needs of returnees, ranging from infrastructure to employment creation, the World Bank and the Government of Yemen, together with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and other organizations of the United Nations system, developed a \$245 million multisectoral emergency recovery programme. The programme was designed to cover the country's needs in a wide range of sectors, including road construction, education, agriculture and housing.

* E/1994/100.

3. To date, the World Bank has mobilized \$60 million in credits and grants for an emergency recovery project, including \$33 million from the World Bank and the International Development Association (IDA), \$15 million from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and \$4.5 million from Germany. UNDP provided \$400,000 to Yemen from special programme resources for supporting countries affected by the crisis in order to assist the Government's management unit, which is coordinating the project.

4. Activities targeted to programme objectives by the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the Netherlands and others bring total funds available for this programme to \$86 million. This leaves a funding gap of \$159 million to implement the programme fully. In the meantime, 60 per cent of the World Bank funds, 25 per cent of the USAID funds and 95 per cent of the German funds have been disbursed to date.

B. Response of organizations of the United Nations system

1. United Nations Children's Fund

5. UNICEF responded to the country's emergency needs in the areas of returnees, cholera control and Somali refugees. In December 1990, the Executive Director of UNICEF approved the release of \$160,000 from the Emergency Reserve Fund in response to the Government's appeal for emergency relief assistance. These funds were used to procure and air freight 14 tons of emergency health and drug kits to support relief operations in the Tihama region. A subsequent release of \$100,000 from the Emergency Relief Fund was approved in January 1991 to procure vaccines and support field operations.

6. At the request of the Government, UNICEF air freighted a consignment of medical supplies worth \$22,000 into the country to assist in cholera case management.

7. During the emergency phase of the influx of refugees from Somalia, UNICEF provided milk and food to the children camped on the beach through Médecins sans frontières and the Red Crescent. Support was also provided to immunize the younger children against measles and to establish an oral rehydration therapy unit.

2. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

8. In order to respond to the emergency recovery programme, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has reoriented its programme in Yemen to assist the country in tackling three main issues: (a) conservation and management of land and water resources, including forestry and range management and livestock development; (b) establishment of adequate production systems for food crops and fodder crops, including marketing, storage and credit; and (c) development of a participatory approach in order to improve primary support services for the smallholder producers through improvement of effective linkages between research and extension.

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9. Within this framework, FAO has conducted, from its technical cooperation resources, an agricultural sector review, with the participation of the Government, the university, private communities and donors. The study identified constraints and recommended solutions.

10. In addition, within the Netherlands Trust Fund modality, FAO initiated the implementation of an environmental resources assessment for rural land-use planning, based on a participatory approach, which will assure the allocation of land resources according to the requirements of communities. With a Swiss trust fund, FAO is strengthening forestry and range management authorities in management and conservation of natural vegetation resources and desertification control. With funds from the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), FAO is implementing a rural family planning project through the agriculture research and extension system. FAO also participated in the initial formulation of the UNDP-coordinated pilot resettlement project for returnees in Tihama.

11. FAO will formulate an integrated rural development project in Abyan governorate, financed by UNDP. It is also expected that FAO will provide technical assistance to the livestock sector, targeted to the family sector producers. It will lead to improvement of family income in rural areas and will contribute to increased job opportunities in fodder production in addition to animal production.

3. United Nations Development Programme

12. Apart from its contribution to the emergency recovery programme, UNDP provided emergency assistance totalling \$100,000 to Yemen, from special programme resources, following two natural disasters. In February 1993, torrential rains and flash floods struck the four southern governorates of Aden, Lahej, Abyan and Shabwa, leaving 38 dead, 5,530 houses destroyed and around 33,000 people homeless. The damage devastated houses, buildings, flood control and irrigation structures, crops, livestock and public infrastructure. Following an appeal made by UNDP and the Department of Humanitarian Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, international donors responded with assistance of \$390,000 from the United States, Netherlands, United Kingdom and Australia. The funds, which have all been disbursed, provided medicines and medical equipment to treat and prevent large-scale outbreaks of communicable diseases and procurement of a sewer emptier/cleaner. The direct total cost of damages caused by the February 1993 flash floods has been estimated at \$312 million, of which damage to the Aden International Airport alone accounted for \$123 million.

13. In May 1993 swarms of locusts entered the Marib and Shabwa governorate, causing extensive damage to pastures, grain and fruit farms in an area estimated to be 5,580 sq. km. UNDP provided logistical support for an aerial spraying campaign coordinated by FAO and funded by the Government and the donor community.

14. In the area of resource mobilization, in January 1994 representatives from the Government and UNDP attended a workshop on resource mobilization through effective aid coordination and management, sponsored by the Special Unit for Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries (SUTCDC) and the Division for

Regional Programmes in the Regional Bureau for Arab States (DRP/RBAS). A substantive revision of the ongoing UNDP/national execution project is anticipated to improve resource mobilization for capacity-building in the Ministry of Planning and Development.

15. The first country programme for Yemen, with an original total indicative planning figure of \$42.6 million over the five-year period 1992-1996, responds to the General Assembly and Economic and Social Council resolutions on assistance to Yemen dating from December 1990. The country programme's four areas of concentration focus on strategic planning, management development, human development and natural resources management. Seed money has been provided to support strategic planning for industrial development and investment promotion in the private sector and for health development and women in development. The Government has requested UNDP cooperation in preparing a country strategy note.

16. Although significant sectoral and subsectoral studies carried out at the country level on vocational training, environment, water and privatization resulted in a number of concrete programme and project ideas, approvals and budget build-up has been much slower than anticipated due to internal political conflict. Nevertheless, by the end of January 1994, the total level of pipeline projects had reached \$11.1 million. A major pipeline project ready for approval is a \$4 million water resources management project, with \$2 million pledged as cost-sharing by the Netherlands. The mid-term review of the country programme scheduled for October 1994 will discuss four substantive areas: water, women in development, environment and the public sector.

17. Provision of assistance to returnees with a UNDP input of \$1.5 million is under discussion with the Government. Returnees are in need of food, shelter, health services, education and other services and employment. UNDP, FAO and the United Nations Centre for Human Settlement (Habitat) are ready to finalize an integrated rural development project for the resettlement of returnees in Tihama once the land has been allocated. The proposed project will settle some 5,000 returnees on Government-selected land for their sustainable employment in agriculture and animal husbandry. It will also benefit the resident community by providing improved land use and productivity and more employment opportunities.

4. World Food Programme

18. In response to an appeal from the Government to address the emergency in Aden caused by flash floods in February 1993, the World Food Programme (WFP) approved assistance for 3,000 flood victims for a period of six months at a total estimated cost of \$118,000.

19. Assistance to Ethiopian and Somali refugees has been provided in food assistance amounting to \$1.7 million to feed an estimated 31,000 refugees since February 1992. Currently, WFP continues to assist 13,000 refugees.

20. WFP reconstruction and development efforts in Yemen include the development of rural community infrastructure, at an estimated cost of \$13.5 million, and

assistance for soil and water conservation, at an estimated cost of \$6.5 million.

21. In the health and education sector, WFP is assisting the country through three projects by providing assistance for primary education, at an estimated cost of \$21.6 million; assistance to maternal and child health centres, at an estimated cost of \$9.5 million; and assistance to health-care units, hospitals and social centres. Under the latter project, WFP so far has provided food assistance amounting to \$23.5 million. Currently, the project is being reformulated, and the estimated cost is not yet available.

5. United Nations Population Fund

22. The implementation of the 1992-1996 UNFPA country programme progressed considerably during 1993. The major developments have been focused on the operationalization of the national population policy. Seven sectoral workshops were organized in 1993 to review the implementation and impact of the national population policy and to develop effective mechanisms to integrate population variables into the development planning of Yemen.

23. In the light of the Government's objectives and priorities in the health sector, UNFPA has approved and operationalized a major project amounting to \$3 million to assist the Government in improving the access and the quality of care for maternal and child health services, including family planning.

24. UNFPA is also providing assistance in the area of population information, education and communication. This is being carried out through different sectoral information, education and communications projects throughout the country. The emphasis is on developing a multimedia approach to encourage the use of reproductive health services and for other family health-related issues, including breast-feeding and the prevention of sexually transmitted diseases, including AIDS.

25. UNFPA continues to emphasize the necessity of highlighting gender issues during the population census and other surveys in order to obtain a realistic picture of the socio-cultural and economic status of women, particularly their economic activities. In this connection, an important activity organized in collaboration with the University of Sana'a was the national workshop on legislation related to women's status in Yemen, held in November 1993.

26. UNFPA is also working with non-governmental organizations that are active in community-based programmes to assist local families in the provision of health education services.

6. World Health Organization

27. The World Health Organization (WHO) has responded to the Government's call for emergency assistance in a number of key areas, providing both preventative and curative health care. Since 1990, diarrhoeal diseases have become a top priority in Yemen because of the large number of cases and deaths witnessed in

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the last three years. WHO has provided financial and technical assistance amounting to \$550,000 to the Ministry of Public Health and related ministries to control diarrhoeal diseases. WHO input for the control of other communicable diseases, including malaria, schistosomiasis, leprosy, onchocerciasis, and upper respiratory tract infections, amounted to \$1.5 million.

28. In the area of health manpower development to improve the standard of performance of human resources, WHO has provided \$800,000 since 1990. Health promotion and disease prevention include a broad spectrum of activities covering health education and information, vaccination, maternal and child health care, and nutrition and amounting to \$1.2 million. Health management is a particularly weak area in Yemen. To improve the managerial process for national health development, WHO has provided technical assistance and financial assistance amounting to \$700,000 over the period under review.

29. Under its regular budget, WHO has provided \$60,000 to the Government of Yemen for the supply of essential drugs and vaccines, as well as \$1 million annually from its Voluntary Fund.

30. Responding to the specific needs of Yemen, WHO has intensified its collaboration with the Government to develop infrastructure for human resource development, district health systems based on primary health care, and information systems and health-financing. These efforts have been funded through extrabudgetary resources amounting to approximately \$500,000 per year.
